

26. (New) The process according to claim 24, wherein said monomer or monomers are acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, maleic acid, fumaric acid, itaconic acid, vinyl sulfonic acid or acrylamidopropanesulfonic acid.

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27. (New) The process according to claim 24, wherein said comonomer or comonomers are acrylonitrile, methacrylonitrile, N,N-dimethylacryl amide, vinylpyrrolidone, vinylpyridine, vinyl acetate, hydroxy group-containing esters of polymerizable acids, amino group-containing and ammonium group-containing esters and amides of polymerizable acids, C₁-C₁₀ alcohol esters of acrylic and/or methacrylic acid or esters of acrylic and/or methacrylic acid with styrene or alkylated styrene.

28. (New) The process according to claim 24, wherein said heating is carried out for a time period between 10 minutes and 2 hours.

29. (New) The process according to claim 20, wherein said heating is carried out for a time period between 10 minutes and 1 hour.

30. (New) The process according to claim 24, wherein said heating is carried out for a time period between 10 minutes and 1 hour.

31. (New) The process according to claim 20, wherein said heating is carried out for a time period between 10 minutes and 2 hours.--

REMARKS

It is requested that the Examiner acknowledge receipt of the priority document. The Patent and Trademark Office mailed a notification of acceptance of the application under 37 C.F.R. §371 on August 8, 2000 in which it was noted that the priority document had been received.

A PTO 1449 is being submitted with this response including references cited on the International Search Report. The International Search Report with copies of the references